CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 7 September 1999, at 10.20 a.m.

President: Mr. Leslie Luck (Australia)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 836th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Finland (who will be speaking on behalf of the European Union), the United States of America, Hungary, France, the United Kingdom and Bulgaria.

Once we have listened to the speakers inscribed, I intend to suspend the plenary meeting and immediately convene an informal plenary in order to consider the draft annual report to the United Nations General Assembly, as contained in document CD/WP.503/Rev.1. Thereafter, I shall resume the plenary meeting in order to formally adopt our draft annual report.

Before giving the floor to the speakers inscribed for today, I should like, on behalf of all of us, to bid farewell to our colleague from Hungary, Ambassador Péter Náray, who will be shortly leaving Geneva. During his four years as representative of his country in the Conference, Ambassador Náray, in his capacity as Special Coordinator on the review of the agenda of the CD in 1997 and 1998, contributed to our common efforts aimed at developing an agenda for the Conference which would take into account the changes that have taken place since the end of the cold war. I am sure that I speak on behalf of all of us when I express to Ambassador Náray and his family our very best wishes for continued success and for personal happiness.

I now give the floor to the representative of Finland, Ambassador Markku Reimaa, who will speak on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. REIMAA (Finland): Mr. President, it is perhaps a bit late to congratulate, but since this is the first time I take the floor during your presidency, I would like to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

Finland has the honour to take the floor today on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta align themselves with this declaration.

As the 1999 session of the Conference on Disarmament is drawing to its conclusion, let us assure you that we support your efforts to come to an agreement to start substantive work as soon as possible. At the same time, we appreciate the work done by the previous Presidents on this difficult issue.

The fissile material cut-off treaty has been the long-standing goal of the international community. In 1993, the General Assembly of the United Nations unanimously recommended negotiations on an FMCT. In the decision on "Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament" the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty unanimously recognized the importance of such negotiations in the full realization and effective implementation of article VI of the NPT. In 1995, and again

(Mr. Reimaa, Finland)

in 1998, the Conference on Disarmament decided to establish an ad hoc committee. The General Assembly of the United Nations unanimously welcomed this decision in 1998 and encouraged the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish this ad hoc committee at the beginning of the 1999 session.

The European Union believes that a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty constitutes, after the CTBT, a major step towards the achievement of both the nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament objectives envisaged in the NPT document on principles and objectives.

The European Union is convinced that an FMCT, by irreversibly limiting the fissile material stockpiles available for use in nuclear weapons and by establishing an effective verification system, will strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and will constitute a significant step towards the realization and effective implementation of article VI of the NPT.

In view of the agreement in the CD in August 1998 to establish an ad hoc committee on FMCT, it is incumbent on the CD to take an early decision to resume these negotiations.

The member States of the European Union and the associated countries have a very clear position and objective: they will continue to work strenuously for the FMCT, they are ready to participate in negotiations on such a treaty actively and constructively and they will promote an early and successful outcome of negotiations.

In conclusion, the EU is of the view that the negotiations should start immediately and efforts should be pursued vigorously to reach an agreement on the remaining elements of a substantive programme of work.

I have asked that the declaration of the European Union be issued as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Finland for his statement and for the kind words which he has addressed to the Chair. I give the floor now to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Robert T. Grey.

Mr. GREY (United States of America): Mr. President, first of all, my congratulations to you upon your assumption of the presidency during the important final phase of our annual session. I can assure you of the continued full support of my delegation as you carry out your responsibilities.

I am taking the floor briefly as our 1999 session comes to a close to put on the record my delegation's view of the outcome of our proceedings this year. A great deal of effort has gone into the search for compromises that would allow our work to begin, especially on a fissile material cut-off treaty. Unfortunately, we were unable to arrive at a mutually satisfactory

(Mr. Grey, United States)

arrangement, and yet another year has passed without any material progress to show to the international community. In fact, compared to last year, when at least two ad hoc committees were established, this year can only be described as especially impoverished. We have allowed the best (or what purports to be the best from some national perspectives) to become the enemy of the good. In fact, it appears that some may have used the best as a tactic to deliberately prevent any good from being done, especially the good that we all have agreed to do - FMCT.

Nevertheless, I choose to take the view that, while the glass isn't even close to half full, it has at least a little bit of water in it. Our discussions over the past several months have brought out clearly what is possible and what is not. In sometimes painful debates, we have laboured to define our various national positions and to explain the rationale for them. While we have not been able to agree, at least the parameters of the debate have been clarified, and the options available to us have been outlined with a high degree of precision. Compared with the work done by the CD in the first half of this decade, this may not be much. But at least it provides the possibility of preparing the CD to begin work rapidly in the next session.

As we move into the millennium year, I would hope that the CD could build on this foundation to reach agreement on a work programme as early as next January. We have struggled mightily to get where we are now, which can be defined as a point where we have agreement on virtually all elements of a work programme save two. I know that you and your successor plan to consult intensively during the coming months to see whether further flexibility can be achieved so that a work programme can be put into place at the beginning of our 2000 session. For my part, I plan to work with you, Mr. President, to take advantage of any flexibility that may exist on the part of my Government so that the mutual interests of all CD members in achieving a work programme can be met. I hope others can do so as well. With this objective in mind, I can only endorse your call for flexibility and pragmatism on the part of all CD members in their talks with you. It's the only hope we have of avoiding yet another sterile year on the multilateral arms control front, and for beginning the new millennium with a solid and full-scale arms control programme of work. With luck, we'll get there.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of the United States of America for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I give the floor now to the representative of Hungary, Ambassador Péter Náray.

Mr. NÁRAY (Hungary): Mr. President, since this is the first time that I take the floor under your presidency, I wish to congratulate you on the assumption of the post of President of the Conference, and I would like to thank you for the very kind words which you addressed to me. I have asked for the floor in my personal capacity because at the end of this month I will leave my post as Hungary's Permanent Representative to the CD. I take this opportunity to bid farewell and to extend my best wishes to the CD for the future.

(Mr. Náray, Hungary)

Most of my colleagues who have recently left Geneva complained that they had done almost nothing in the last few years in the CD. Perhaps they were right and our results have been really meagre lately. But it is also possible that they just did not recognize the value of what they had achieved during their period in this distinguished body and that history will correct their judgement. Let us take for example the speech made by the Ambassador of the Netherlands some days ago. He also spoke to us of his negative feelings and disappointment due to his two years of inactivity in Geneva. However, he seemed to underestimate the scientific importance of the discovery he had made in Geneva that there is a linear relationship between the length of a diplomat's stay in Geneva and the number of pages of his or her farewell statement. I think the time has come to evaluate our deeds properly, and we should recognize that our colleague has made a Majoor contribution to the development of international farewell speech law and has opened new avenues for future generations of CD diplomats.

Mr. President, in this spirit, I make a confession. Now I see the importance of my years in Geneva as a CD representative differently than a short time ago. You may remember - actually you referred to the fact - that in 1997 and 1998, I had the honour to be appointed by the CD as Special Coordinator on the review of the agenda. Both years, after long hours and days of consultations with many members, I reportedly came to the conclusion that consensus on the future agenda was not within reach and, therefore, I was not in a position to make any substantive recommendations. Of course, I also was frustrated, and perhaps that was the reason why I finished my statements with a slight exaggeration that according to my impressions, delegations were interested and willing to take up this issue the following year. Now, at the end of our annual session, you can rightly tell me that I misled the CD, because, in 1999, even the appointment of special coordinators was not within its possibilities or even its wishes.

The reason that I still have a feeling of satisfaction from my activities as Special Coordinator is that others might appreciate my work. Recently, theatre experts told me that thanks to the Internet, they had access to my reports in which they could identify the best absurd drama they had recently read. They were seriously considering nominating the CD for the next Academy Award for inventing genuinely new dramatic structures which would certainly revolutionize modern theatre and film. "Look at the texts of the players and the stage management", they told me with enthusiasm. On stage No. 1 - let's call it negotiating room XVII or XVIII - the players create the impression that they are speaking the same language and that they understand each other when using such expressions as "agenda", "work programme", "procedure", "substance" or "consensus". The story flows smoothly towards the finale, which is usually dramatic, but not beyond expectations. However, when they march on to a different stage, which they call the "Council room", an unexpected new dimension of absurdity is added to the play. In this room, the same players do not understand the same words because they attach to them meanings totally different from some moments before. What was called "agenda" on stage No. 1, here, for some, becomes "programme of work", while "programme of work" is referred to as "calendar of meetings", and there are players who insist that in this room "procedure is substance". The dramatic tension is

(Mr. Náray, Hungary)

increased by frequent references to holy texts and places, such as "Decalogue" or "SSOD I-II-III-IV". The absurdity and the confusion is without equal and worthy of recognition in the world of entertainment.

I am afraid that the word "consensus" may get a new meaning if the CD continues its practice established in the last two years. If I am not mistaken, all members who took the floor this year, and last year, said that the time had come to start negotiations on an FMCT. To my understanding, this could be called a "consensus". Nevertheless, in terms of substantive work, nothing has happened. Perhaps a new interpretation is in the making and at the end of the day we will be told that consensus is not enough to do something in the CD; we need a "consensus plus" for a decision in this body. Is that not again an absurdity? I hope that the CD will do its best to avoid being associated in future with any sort of drama.

Mr. President, many representatives have expressed concerns about the future of the CD. I share their worries, but I still see some hope on the horizon. I still expect that early next year, without any linkages, you will start negotiations on the text of a nuclear cut-off treaty and negotiations will be finished in a foreseeable future. If not, and if the CD is not engaged in any substantial activity next year either, it will face a grave situation, which will require new approaches. In that case, my suggestion would be to examine the prospects of disarmament negotiations in the CD in general, including the root causes of the problems. I take the view that it is perfectly within the mandate of the CD to address the underlying problems which prevent the commencement of new disarmament negotiations. It would be difficult to argue that preparation of the ground for future negotiations is not within the domain of a multilateral negotiating forum.

When the CD turns toward the root causes of the present stalemate in disarmament negotiations, my humble suggestion would be to address the issue in all its complexity. I know that the CD is not a research institution, but I do not think either that the examination and analysis of the motivations of States with respect to disarmament negotiations should be left entirely to academics and NGOs. Soon, we will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the moment when the world left behind the period of the cold war. I am not sure that we have drawn the necessary conclusions from the fact that we live in a totally new period, when the world is no longer bipolar as it used to be. The CD and its procedures have been shaped with regard to a specific structure which ceased to exist 10 years ago. The meaning of the rule of consensus was totally clear at that time. No disarmament negotiations could be started without a consensus between the major players. I could say that our recent practice is very far from this original concept, or I could add that a part of our rules of procedure is misused. But I also wish to highlight a different aspect of our new epoch. And that is globalization. I know that this phenomenon is referred to very frequently and sometimes without any justification, but I am not aware of any in-depth authentic analysis of the interrelationship between globalization and the willingness of States to engage in disarmament negotiations. I am convinced that the process of globalization has a substantial impact on disarmament issues. Why? The answer is simple. Globalization has accelerated the speed of history. I

(Mr. Náray, Hungary)

would mention here that the end of the cold war - at least in my perception - was already one of the first results of the accelerated globalization process. In the period of globalization, the efficiency or inefficiency of economic and political systems may not be hidden for decades, let alone for centuries, like before. Probably, accelerated historical developments have an impact on the strategies followed by States and their propensity for disarmament negotiations. The losers of history may hope that they can avoid the unavoidable if they are well armed. Or some countries may think that these turbulent times are not appropriate for starting new major disarmament talks. However, it would be good to remind them that countries, as history has already demonstrated, can be destroyed in many ways. One of them is to be engaged in a hopeless arms race.

Let me add that as the representative of Hungary in the CD, I have had no reason to complain about lack of progress in the areas which are closely related to disarmament. In this period, my country has institutionalized its relations with many like-minded partners and we have occupied our seat in the Western Group, which had been left empty for decades for reasons beyond our control. I am confident that my country will also do its best in the future, in this new capacity, for a safer world.

I am already reading the fourth page of my speech. As I am just finishing my fourth year in Geneva, I feel that I should obey the rule formulated by Ambassador Majoor and conclude my statement. However, before doing so, I wish to thank Secretary-General Vladimir Petrovsky, Deputy Secretary-General Abdelkader Bensmail and their excellent staff for their help and cooperation.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Hungary for his statement and for the very kind words he has addressed to the Chair, and wish him well again in the future. I give the floor now to the representative of France, Ambassador Hubert de La Fortelle.

Mr. de La FORTELLE (France) (translated from French): At the moment when the 1999 session of the Conference on Disarmament is drawing to a close, it might not be superfluous to make an initial brief assessment and to outline the prospects that lie ahead of us. The discussions - or rather the sham negotiations - on the preparation of the report that our Conference traditionally submits to the United Nations General Assembly have been instructive on a number of counts, for myself as a relative newcomer.

First of all, I would say that the conclusions of this session strike me as disquieting. I will confine myself to the four most significant conclusions. First of all, immobility: the "tyranny of inertia" finally carried the day over the will to act. Why? A significant majority opted for the easy way out, that of abiding by precedent to the detriment of the more demanding path of innovation, that is, fostering progress on essential subjects.

(Mr. de La Fortelle, France)

Second - reality. Political correctness also won out over straight talking. Why? Here again a majority preferred the easy way out by preferring set speeches to a description of the true situation.

Third - consensus. The golden rule of our institution has been subjected to rough treatment. Why? The very parties who preach morality did not take the trouble to keep the word they had given, both in Geneva and in New York. I am speaking here, of course, of the establishment of the ad hoc committee on cut-off in August 1998 and the resolution on the same subject adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly last December.

Lastly - the New Agenda. The coalition of 7 had recently been endeavouring to project a moderate and responsible image. However, several of its members showed themselves in a completely different light during the discussions last Thursday and Friday. They revealed how little importance they attached to article 11 of their own resolution of last year, which was very favourable to the rapid commencement of cut-off negotiations. It will not be easy to forget such inconsistency.

My second point is that the prospects for the year 2000 session appear very bleak. I will just highlight the three consequences that I think are most disturbing.

First - the programme of work. The basic, if informal, underpinning constituted by Ambassador Dembri's "package", built around three themes - nuclear disarmament, space and the cut-off - in order to reach consensus, was seriously placed in jeopardy during the debates. I am very much afraid that if we stray from that path it will be very difficult for us to find a way out.

Second - the cut-off. The commencement of these essential negotiations has been put off indefinitely. Why? After being accepted by all without a debate in 1998, in 1999 it was called into question through references to preconditions and linkages of which no written trace can be found. Is it not paradoxical, as our colleague Ambassador André Mernier pointed out, to see the nuclear-weapon States urging a start to negotiations which will impose on them major additional constraints but which are rejected by the non-nuclear-weapon States to whom the cut-off is meant to give greater security? If some countries - probably very much in the minority in the Conference on Disarmament - reject this fundamental contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, we must draw the necessary conclusions. To judge by the discussions of the last few days, these negotiations do not stand any greater chance of starting in the year 2000 - at least the early months of the year 2000 - than they did in 1999.

Third - the Conference. The Conference must avoid at all costs a fourth year of deadlock that would lead it into even greater discredit. The inter-sessional consultations will be useful if there is a genuine political will to overcome the current difficulties. If not, they will be but a smokescreen designed to give everyone a clear conscience.

(Mr. de La Fortelle, France)

Mr. President, on behalf of my delegation, I wish you courage and, if possible, success for this period of your term, which will not necessarily be the least difficult.

So where do we stand now? Let us not delude ourselves. The Conference on Disarmament today is gravely ill. Do those who stand conspicuously by its bedside all really wish to see it recover? The practice of laying down systematic linkages, requiring "all or nothing", raising the stakes, is in the process of killing an irreplaceable organization, because the substitutes devised here or there will never secure the agreement of the main players. It is high time that the sorcerer's apprentices recognize this at last.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of France for his comments and especially for his words of support addressed to the Chair.

May I just take this moment to say from a purely national perspective - since I do not have that privilege in my role as President - to just underline that early commencement of negotiations in this Conference on a fissile material cut-off treaty is also a very high priority for Australia in the arms control field, as was explained by our Foreign Minister, Mr. Downer, when he last addressed this Conference. This is because we, like others, believe that the treaty would be a key means to achieve the twin objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation, and on that basis, we would like to see the early re-establishment of an ad hoc committee on FMCT as part of a balanced programme of work in the CD.

I revert now to my role as President. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Ian Soutar.

Mr. SOUTAR (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Mr. President, since this is the first time I have taken the floor during your presidency, might I begin by conveying to you my sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency? I would also like to take this opportunity to assure you of the full and unstinting support and cooperation of my delegation during the remainder of your time in office.

When I first considered making a statement, it was in the hope that I would be able to offer you congratulations - as I had hoped to do, long before now, to each of your predecessors - on the re-establishment of an ad hoc committee to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). Regrettably, that is not to be. After months of meetings and many hours of consultations, the Conference continues - with the sole exception of the welcome, if long overdue, decision on expansion - to find itself in a lamentable, and, in the British Government's view, totally unacceptable, impasse.

I do not think the hope I harboured over the past eight months particularly unreasonable or naive. I came to the Conference at the start of the year fully expecting to start work on an FMCT negotiation. I have yet to hear a single delegation fail to support the early commencement of cut-off negotiations. I am therefore left wondering how the CD has managed, in its own inimitable way, to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

(Mr. Soutar, United Kingdom)

Recent history certainly suggested a radically different scenario. I can hardly fail, reflecting on the work - or sad lack thereof - that we have been engaged in since the start of the session, to cast my mind back to this time last year. Then, I had the honour of occupying the place you now occupy, Mr. President, and I well recall the pleasure I had in overseeing the creation, on 11 August 1998, of an ad hoc committee under item 1 of our agenda.

I need hardly remind the Conference that that Ad Hoc Committee subsequently recommended that it be re-established at the beginning of this session - a recommendation forcefully endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly last November in its consensus resolution 53/77 I and reflected also in consensus resolution 53/79 B on the report of the CD.

I apologize for repeating facts which are well known to all delegations here, but it is easy, it appears, even at this short remove, to forget that there was consensus within this body for FMCT negotiations when we agreed the last report of the Conference, and that that consensus continued to exist during the inter-sessional period.

Mr. President, it was against this background, and with these positive developments fresh in mind, that my delegation approached the beginning of this year's session. You may well understand our deep disappointment at the subsequent depressing turn of events. We were left wondering why, when consensus existed, the Conference was unable simply to pick up its work where it had left off only a few months before.

What had changed so dramatically in the intervening period? Had FMCT negotiations assumed less importance? I think not. I believe that, just as there was last year and in previous years, there remained in January (and remains to this day) understanding within the international community on what practical steps need to be taken to ensure the elimination of nuclear weapons. This Conference has already negotiated one of the measures called for in the "Principles and objectives" of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference - the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. The next agreed step is the negotiation of a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

I will not set out the obvious benefits of an FMCT here. The United Kingdom has already elaborated these at some length in this forum and elsewhere. But I will repeat one clear and uncontested truth: a cut-off treaty will make a substantial, vital and practical contribution to advancing the goal of global nuclear disarmament. There simply cannot be nuclear disarmament without confidence that no new fissile material is being produced for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. An FMCT is not then the last step, but it is the next essential one.

Since the negotiation of a cut-off treaty is the undisputed next step on the road towards nuclear disarmament, and nuclear disarmament is self-evidently accorded an extremely high priority in the CD, the Conference's inability to get down to substantive work on an FMCT is all the more difficult

(Mr. Soutar, United Kingdom)

to explain. Any casual observer would immediately spot the irony in a state of affairs in which those who purport to be the strongest advocates of nuclear disarmament refuse to allow work to begin on what all agree is the most important practical next step forward, unless discussions on nuclear disarmament are held in parallel.

My delegation expected, at the start of this session, to witness the prompt adoption of a work programme modelled closely on that agreed painstakingly last year, following two long years of discussions. In addition to agreement to re-establish ad hoc committees on FMCT and, of course, security assurances, we came to the Conference ready to consider any reasonable proposal capable of commanding consensus on those other items, particularly nuclear disarmament, anti-personnel landmines and transparency in armaments, on which further work was still required at the end of the 1998 session.

To this end, the United Kingdom, together with the United States of America and France, put forward a working paper (CD/1586) on the programme of work of the Conference. This paper acknowledged the extremely high priority accorded to nuclear disarmament, and took up useful language from the earlier proposal put forward by Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway. Events since then have shown the mechanism of the latter proposal - the formation of an ad hoc working group - to be acceptable to all. My delegation commends the mandate equally.

I realize, as a representative of a nuclear-weapon State, that I will be damned for what I do say, and damned for what I do not. But I hope I have, at least, made plain the United Kingdom's willingness - if there remains any doubt - to enter immediately into FMCT negotiations and to agree a sensible programme of work for the CD. The United Kingdom has demonstrated its readiness to be flexible in translating its commitment to meaningful progress towards nuclear disarmament from words into deeds, and we look to others to do the same.

Progress depends on the resolve of all delegations. As August 1998 showed, there exists a consensus to start negotiations on an FMCT, its mandate is agreed, it is recognized by all parties to the CD as the logical next step in an incremental process. But it cannot happen because we cannot agree the basis on which other issues will be addressed.

Is this how our predecessors thought the CD would develop? That countries would refuse even to start negotiations because other things needed to be talked about at the same time? You may wonder, like me and many others, how much longer deadlock in the CD can continue. I have heard reform mentioned a number of times and with increasing regularity in recent weeks. Perhaps the CD does now need to take a long, hard look at the way it functions. But I frankly doubt if any amount of self-examination will do any good if delegations are not prepared to honour commitments they have made in the recent past.

(Mr. Soutar, United Kingdom)

In the interests of progress, I look forward, now, to participating in the consultations you will conduct during the inter-sessional period, with a view to starting substantive work at the beginning of next year. My delegation will not renege on its responsibilities, and I urge others to live up to theirs. Only then will the Conference be able to assume its rightful place at the forefront of efforts to promote non-proliferation and disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his statement and for his words addressed to the Chair. I now have on my list the distinguished representative of Bulgaria, Ambassador Petko Draganov.

Mr. DRAGANOV (Bulgaria): Mr. President, since this is also the first time I am taking the floor under your presidency in a formal meeting, allow me to congratulate you on the skilful way in which you have conducted the work of this Conference and the elaboration of our annual report. Our appreciation goes as well to your predecessors, to the Secretary-General, Mr. Petrovsky, to the Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Bensmail, and to the secretariat. The Bulgarian delegation will support your further efforts in the inter-sessional consultations that will hopefully bring about an early start of substantive work in this Conference next year.

It is also my great pleasure and satisfaction to welcome among us the representatives of the five new CD members and to assure them of my delegation's continued cooperation.

May I join in the tribute to Ambassador Náray and the words of well-wishing addressed to him? May I also add our expression of well-meaning and good wishes to the distinguished representative of Romania, Mr. Pavel Grecu, who has also presided over this Conference, who I understand will be leaving us at the end of this month?

Mr. President, today I would like to inform the Conference that on 2 September of this year, the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria ratified the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. Under article XIV of the Treaty, Bulgaria is one of the 44 States who have to deposit their instruments of ratification with the United Nations Secretary-General so that the CTBT can enter into force. Today, only half of those States have ratified the Treaty. Well-known difficulties, mainly of a political character, have created this situation. It is of the utmost importance for the international community to intensify its efforts in order to accelerate the ratification process and facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT. We call on all countries who have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so and participate actively in the forthcoming special conference. In the words of a famous State President, and I hope my distinguished colleague from South Africa will allow me the quote, "Now is the time!" Now, more than ever, the disarmament process, and nuclear disarmament in particular, needs a breath of fresh air. Not to mention this Conference.

(Mr. Draganov, Bulgaria)

We hope that the countries sincerely concerned by the present stalemate in the field of disarmament and global security matters will undertake the relevant responsible action.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Bulgaria for his comments and words of encouragement. I now give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan, who has asked for the floor, Ambassador Akram.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): Mr. President, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the admirable manner in which you have steered the Conference towards its conclusion. You have conducted the business of this Conference in the last few weeks in a patient and dedicated manner, and I believe that because of your perseverance, the Conference, despite its difficulties, will conclude its 1999 session in a positive and forward-looking spirit. My distinguished colleague from the United Kingdom a while ago stated that he realized as a representative of a nuclear-weapon State that he would be damned for what he did say and damned for what he did not say. I must confess that I have had less practice than he has and therefore, I would like to add a few remarks at our meeting today.

Pakistan will support the endeavours to reach a balanced programme of work for the CD next year. We believe that the statements which we have heard so far in the CD today have not fully and objectively reflected the realities which have confronted the Conference and the members of the Conference this year. There were common elements upon which we could have worked to evolve agreement on a programme of work. Further consultations were required to reach agreement on two issues - nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space - and the failure of the CD to reach agreement is because those delegations which were in a very small minority on these issues were unable to make the necessary compromises to reflect the general wish and consensus of the Conference. Unjustified obstacles were placed in the work of the CD on the priority issue of nuclear disarmament as well as the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It will be necessary for the Conference to deal with these issues in a serious and substantive manner. Nuclear disarmament is the highest priority for disarmament negotiations. The nuclear-weapon States must practise what they preach. No one doubts that the prevention of an arms race in outer space is now another issue requiring urgent attention. We cannot accept that the Conference on Disarmament has no role to play in these vital issues and all that it can do is to simply negotiate redundant non-proliferation measures.

The analyses of the ailments of the CD which have been offered here today are partial. The fact of the matter is that the whole agenda of disarmament has suffered a setback in recent months, and it has suffered a setback for very concrete and tangible reasons: the prospect of revision of the ABM Treaty, the prospect of the deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems and theatre missile defences, the likely impact - or negative impact -

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

on the strategic arms talks and agreements of these developments, the possibility of the revival of a nuclear arms race both at the global level and at the regional level in various parts of the world, including my region of South Asia, and then the announcement of India's nuclear doctrine.

In my statement of 19 August, I outlined Pakistan's concerns regarding the nuclear doctrine released by India on 17 August this year. This morning the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan has delivered a statement in Islamabad at our Institute of Strategic Studies on the regional and global implications of India's nuclear doctrine. I have requested the secretariat to circulate the text of the Foreign Secretary's statement and I have asked that this be circulated also as an official document of this Conference.

The statement examines the developments since the nuclear tests in South Asia last year. It outlines Pakistan's positive response to the call for restraint in the development and deployment of nuclear arms and ballistic missiles. It explains the rationale for Pakistan's proposal for a strategic restraint regime in South Asia. The Foreign Secretary of Pakistan has drawn attention to the fact that the nuclear doctrine announced by India is a prescription for a massive militarization programme, both in the nuclear and conventional fields. It will create a new and far more dangerous round of instability in the region with operationally deployed and ready-to-use nuclear weapons. It is a clear rejection of all initiatives to curb an arms race in South Asia and will constitute the most serious obstacle to any prospects for nuclear and missile restraint in South Asia.

A lot has been said here about the fissile material so-called "cut-off" treaty, and we have heard of course the most rigorous advocacy of this from those who are perhaps new converts to the cause. As far as Pakistan is concerned, we are prepared to participate in negotiations when the CD commences next year, but as our Foreign Secretary has observed in his statement, "India's intention to manufacture 400 or more nuclear warheads is also of special concern to Pakistan. India will require substantial quantities of fissile material for such a large nuclear force. Under these circumstances, neither India nor Pakistan could accept the conclusion of an FMCT, much less a moratorium on fissile material production." In his statement, the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan has called on the international community to urge India to take 10 steps to reverse the dangerous implications of its nuclear doctrine. I will read these 10 steps which he has proposed. The world must ask India to assure its neighbours and the world that:

1. It will not conduct further nuclear tests. Until the CTBT comes into force, Pakistan and India could formalize their unilateral moratoriums into a binding bilateral arrangement;

2. It will not operationally deploy its nuclear weapons and will keep them in a non-deployed mode;

3. It will not build the hundreds of nuclear warheads as envisaged by its nuclear doctrine;

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

4. It will not produce or possess the large stocks of fissile materials which would enable it to build a large arsenal of nuclear weapons in the future. In this context, steps should be taken to achieve a balance between the unequal stockpiles of India and Pakistan;

5. It will not seek to create sea-based and submarine-based nuclear forces;

6. It will not seek to acquire, develop or deploy anti-ballistic missile systems which could escalate development and deployment of nuclear arms in the region;

7. It will refrain from any military-related actions in space;

8. It will review and restrain its plans for the acquisition and development of advanced aircraft, nuclear submarines and other technologically advanced weapons systems which could accentuate and accelerate the nuclear and conventional arms race in the region;

9. It will seriously address and resolve the outstanding issues with Pakistan, especially the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, with the active support and involvement of the international community; and

10. It will enter into negotiations with Pakistan to elaborate a strategic restraint regime for South Asia.

If the international community fails once again to deplore India's nuclear military escalation, Pakistan, which has so far restrained itself, will obviously be obliged to take the necessary action to ensure the credibility of its deterrence posture. Unfortunately, this would imply an end to any realistic prospects to prevent an open arms race in South Asia. It is ironic that the international community has failed to act in part because of actions of those who decry the inaction of the Conference on Disarmament. In particular, countries planning to sell advanced conventional weapons to India should carefully consider the consequences of adding qualitatively and quantitatively to India's massive conventional forces. This would further aggravate the conventional balance in South Asia and may compel Pakistan to place greater reliance on its nuclear and missile capabilities to deter India. Thus, sales of conventional arms and ABM systems to India will create a more unstable security situation in South Asia.

Mr. President, even at this late stage, Pakistan is committed to pursuing contacts and consultations with all the members of the international community in order to evolve a broadly agreed approach to deal with the threats to regional and global peace and security emerging from India's political and military ambitions as revealed in its nuclear doctrine. We hope that at this late stage we shall receive the positive response for which we have hoped for over 35 years.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Pakistan for his comments, and I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of New Zealand, Ambassador Clive Pearson.

Mr. PEARSON (New Zealand): I wish to take the floor to comment on what appears to be a claim, made by the distinguished Ambassador of France in his statement this morning, that suggests that members of the New Agenda Coalition may be inconsistent in their support for negotiations on a fissile materials treaty.

Any such claim is totally incorrect and we reject it categorically. New Zealand has consistently supported early negotiations on a fissile materials treaty and we shall continue to do so as actively as we can nationally, with our New Agenda partners, and with all other countries supporting these negotiations.

We are, however, capable, as are the majority of members of this Conference, of making a clear distinction between using the process of preparing the CD's annual report to score points on the one hand, and the need for an annual report that is balanced and factually correct on the other.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of New Zealand for those comments. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of India, Ambassador Savitri Kunadi.

Ms. KUNADI (India): Mr. President, thank you for giving me the floor, and allow me to express the appreciation of my delegation at seeing you conduct our proceedings at an important juncture in the work of the Conference.

It was not my intention to take the floor this morning, but I have been constrained to do so in view of certain remarks made by the Ambassador of Pakistan relating to India's policy on nuclear weapons. As mentioned during my intervention in the plenary on 19 August, these comments are ill-informed and a result of misperceptions. Moreover, we have always maintained that the Conference on Disarmament is not the forum for a discussion of such issues. But since Pakistan has sought to raise it again today, we feel that the facts must again be set out clearly.

The document entitled "Indian nuclear doctrine" prepared by the National Security Advisory Board, which consists of eminent experts and strategic analysts, is one of the inputs for consideration by the Government. It is a draft and was released to the public in order to encourage discussion and debate at the wider public and political levels. This would constitute an important input for finalizing a doctrine after the general elections.

India believes that as a responsible nuclear-weapon State, it should have a clearly stated nuclear doctrine reflecting openness and transparency, which enables other countries to have a better appreciation and understanding of India's policies. Moreover, as a democracy, the decisions on issues relating to national security are always backed by national consensus. India's nuclear policy is the product of a national consensus and is not subject to external prescriptions or conditions.

(Ms. Kunadi, India)

I would like to reiterate that India believes that the use of nuclear weapons constitutes a grave threat to humanity and to peace and stability in the international system. Therefore, while we seek to build an international consensus for global nuclear disarmament, it is important that nuclear-weapon States accept their responsibility and define the objective of nuclear weapons as being limited to deterring the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by an adversary. As a responsible nuclear-weapon State, this is the role that India has defined for its nuclear arsenal. Accordingly, India has declared that it shall not be the first to initiate a nuclear strike, but shall respond with punitive retaliation if attacked with nuclear weapons. India shall also not resort to use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. We will not engage in an arms race or other sterile concepts of the cold war. Restraint is the watchword as far as India's nuclear policy is concerned. We therefore completely reject the aspersions that the Pakistani statement has sought to portray here today. Our nuclear doctrine provides negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. India's doctrine serves to highlight the purely defensive character of our nuclear arsenal.

Pakistan's reaction to the draft document is inexplicable considering that in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan on 21 February 1999 in Lahore, both countries had agreed to engage in bilateral consultations on security concepts and nuclear doctrines with a view to developing measures for confidence-building in the nuclear and the conventional fields. It is a matter of deep regret that instead of building upon the Lahore process, there has been an erosion of trust and deterioration in the bilateral environment because of Pakistan's aggression in Kargil. As a democracy, we certainly believe that the public articulation of the doctrine should be a sign of reassurance. In fact, the articulation of a "first use policy" of Pakistan implies a much higher level of operational alert and is contrary to the notion of restraint reflected in the Indian document. We cannot escape the conclusion that the statement by the delegation of Pakistan rings hollow.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of India for her statement and for the words of support addressed to the Chair. The distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan has requested the floor.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): I listened very carefully to the statement of my distinguished colleague from India, and I did so because I wished to hear from her the possibility of a positive response to the suggestions which the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan has made to India to arrest the dangers of a nuclear and conventional arms race in South Asia. While India has said that its nuclear doctrine is for debate, it is a fact that this doctrine is the consensus and final report of a Security Board established by the Prime Minister of India and that this report was released officially by the National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister of India. We cannot therefore but conclude that the report carries the official weight and support of the Government of India. If this is not the case, what we would then expect from the Government of India - and from the distinguished representative of India - is to say clearly at this Conference - or in any other public forum - that the

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

Government of India disavows the recommendations of this report. This would certainly constitute a confidence-building measure, not only with Pakistan but with the entire international community.

It is true that in Lahore we concluded a memorandum of understanding to build confidence, to discuss our respective nuclear doctrines and postures. What my colleague from India failed to mention was that in Lahore, Pakistan gave to the Indian side, to the Indian Prime Minister, a composite document setting out a strategic restraint regime for South Asia, a restraint regime encompassing nuclear restraint, conventional arms restraint, confidence-building measures and measures to resolve the disputes that exist between India and Pakistan. We did not receive a positive response to discuss that proposal. What we did agree upon was to discuss our respective nuclear doctrines. But it is strange that having agreed to discuss the nuclear doctrine, the next step which India would take is to publicly announce a doctrine which would constitute one of the most significant escalations anywhere in the world - 400 nuclear weapons operationally deployed on a triad of air-based, land-based and sea-based delivery systems.

Is that a confidence-building measure, or a confidence-eroding measure? Was Pakistan supposed to be happy with the declaration of such a doctrine? Is the international community supposed to be reassured by the announcement of such a doctrine, especially when it stipulates that it will be accompanied by a further build-up of conventional weapons as well? And therefore we call upon the international community to take note of this doctrine, to express its concern about this doctrine, to call on India not to implement this doctrine, and at the same time we call on those States which are engaged in the sales of massive conventional arms to India, which would contribute to further imbalance in the security environment in South Asia and accentuate the nuclear threat in our region - we call upon them to halt those sales and not to come to this Conference to preach virtue while they practice vice on a massive scale on our subcontinent.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan for his further statement this morning. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

As I mentioned earlier, I shall now suspend the plenary meeting and convene, in five minutes' time, an informal plenary to consider our draft annual report to the United Nations General Assembly.

The meeting was suspended at 11.35 a.m. and resumed at 12.10 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: I should like now to call to order the resumed 836th plenary meeting of the Conference.

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I shall now invite you to formalize the provisional agreements reached at the informal plenary meeting on the draft annual report as contained in document CD/WP.503/Rev.1. Since we were able to go through the draft annual report paragraph by paragraph at the informal plenary meeting, and in accordance with past practice, I shall proceed to the adoption of our annual report section by section.

May I take it that section I, entitled "Introduction", is adopted?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that section II, entitled "Organization of work of the Conference", is adopted?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that section III, entitled "Substantive work of the Conference during its 1999 session", is adopted? It is understood that a new document, submitted by Pakistan today, will be listed in paragraph 37 as document CD/1594 under (I).

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I now take it that the annual report in its entirety, as contained in document CD/WP.503/Rev.1 and as just orally revised, is adopted?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you for your support in that process. The secretariat will issue the report as an official document in all official languages of the Conference as soon as possible.

Is there any delegation that wishes to take the floor at this stage? I see none. In that case, I shall proceed to make a few concluding remarks of my own.

We have all experienced disappointment that the CD has not made more of a contribution to the further development of the international security system this year. We often console ourselves that the CD can only be a microcosm of the wider international environment, which, from many perspectives, has provided difficult challenges over the last couple of years.

Ultimately, however, the CD is the sum of its parts - of the policies, perspectives and political will of its constituent States. In retrospect we may see the past year or so as one of realignment of those parts with the remaining (and emerging) international security challenges. Perhaps 1999 will after all have been a period of useful preparation for future negotiations notwithstanding our very strong collective sense of missed opportunity.

(The President)

With this perspective, I believe I can say that we have taken a positive step towards the end of our session this year. I would not put it as any more than that, but we have taken a step in deciding to try and complete work on our partially constructed programme of work through continuing Presidential consultations even after our formal session ends. I hope this process will indeed bring us closer to early substantive work. I hope it will bring us closer to undertaking fissile material negotiations, for which there is already a compelling international priority and impetus. I hope it will bring us closer to taking up the genuine interest in an exchange of information and ideas which could contribute to further nuclear disarmament. I hope it will bring us closer to addressing resurgent concerns about the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and I hope it will bring us closer to substantive work on the other widely shared work programme priorities. Judging from this morning's discussion, the gravity and urgency of getting down to work has been very thoroughly underlined in several statements in the debate.

As I said, it is my sense that we have got to the end of our year with a positive frame of mind. In the past few weeks delegations have conveyed to me a strong desire to get the Conference back to work. Having spent 1999 "narrowing the gaps" on some key issues, we should not waste any further time at the beginning of 2000.

Our collective spirit is, I believe, captured by the Presidential statement which we have agreed (report, para. 38). I very much appreciated your valuable cooperation in the achievement of that statement, and I look forward to your continuing support in working over the inter-sessional period to resolve our differences on the outstanding issues in the programme of work.

I should now like to make some more particular comments about the programme of work. My predecessors have, through their own consultations, narrowed the scope of the task before me. In this regard I should like to pay particular tribute to the efforts of the Ambassador of Algeria, Ambassador Dembri.

Ambassador Dembri identified the two pending issues in the programme of work: nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. My immediate predecessor, Ambassador González of Argentina, viewed Ambassador Dembri's proposals as the best way forward towards an agreement on these two issues. I share his assessment and intend to build on Ambassador Dembri's proposals in my consultations.

If I may refer again to the efforts of my predecessor Ambassador González, I would also share his assessment that the Conference's future programme of work, which would include appropriate mechanisms on nuclear disarmament and PAROS, would also encompass the following:

First, the re-establishment of the ad hoc committee under agenda item 1 to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory,

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multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices;

Second, the re-establishment of the ad hoc committee under agenda item 4 to negotiate with a view to reaching agreement on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

Third, the reappointment of a special coordinator under agenda item 6 to seek the views of the members of the Conference on the most appropriate way to deal with the questions related to anti-personnel mines, taking into account, inter alia, developments outside the Conference;

Fourth, the reappointment of a special coordinator under agenda item 7, entitled "Transparency in armaments", to seek the views of the members of the Conference on the most appropriate way to deal with questions related to this item;

Fifth, the reappointment of special coordinators to consider the review of the agenda of the Conference, the expansion of its membership and its improved and effective functioning.

The proposed re-establishment of these two ad hoc committees, and reappointment of these special coordinators, constitute the common elements in all of the proposals which have been put forward this year on the establishment of a comprehensive programme of work. These include draft decisions by Ambassador Grey of the United States (CD/1566) and Ambassador Cedeño of Venezuela (CD/1575) the proposal for a programme of work put forward by the Group of 21 (CD/1570), and that put forward by the United States, the United Kingdom and France (CD/1586).

The existence of these elements of the programme of work in each of these documents reflects the broad view that these are all issues which should be part of our programme of work. No doubt individual delegations would put different emphases on these items of they were designing their very own programme of work. However, as a result of the consensus nature of our work, they are all recognized as being core elements of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

My task, and the task of the incoming President, remains that which was previously outlined by Ambassador Dembri - to bring the Conference to the stage where it can begin work on items on which there exists a broad measure of agreement, by securing compromise on the items which are not yet agreed. I believe we are not far from that agreement. However, often the last remaining steps towards agreement are the hardest, and I am under no illusion that agreement on the outstanding two issues will be an easy task. It is also a task which I can only undertake if the political will exists for me to do so.

I propose to be energetic in that assignment which has been given me and also to my predecessor and my successor in the inter-sessional period and to

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be conscientious in ensuring that consultations are open and fair-minded, that I consult widely and openly and that they are most of all transparent to all participants in this Conference. I shall make special efforts to ensure that no delegation is disadvantaged by either the locality or the intensity of other work that we may some of us be engaged in this period.

Finally, on my own behalf, and also on behalf of the members of the Conference, I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Valadimir Petrovsky, and the Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, and all the members of the secretariat, for their invaluable assistance and advice. I also wish to thank the interpreters for their skill and patience, especially over the last few days when debate was flowing freely and we were budging all around various documents.

On my own behalf, I would also like to thank the Group Coordinators, the Ambassadors of Bulgaria, Indonesia and Italy, and also the Ambassador of China, for their assistance and wise counsel over the past few weeks, and I forewarn them that I may need to call on them again for assistance in the forthcoming months. I have greatly appreciated this opportunity to work very closely with all members of the Conference and to get to know colleagues even better, and I look forward to continuing this cooperation in the inter-sessional period, including of course with Ambassador Kreid of Austria, to whom I offer my wishes for an expeditious and, dare I say, precipitous start to our work in 2000.

This concludes our business for today and the 1999 session of the Conference.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 18 January 2000, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.